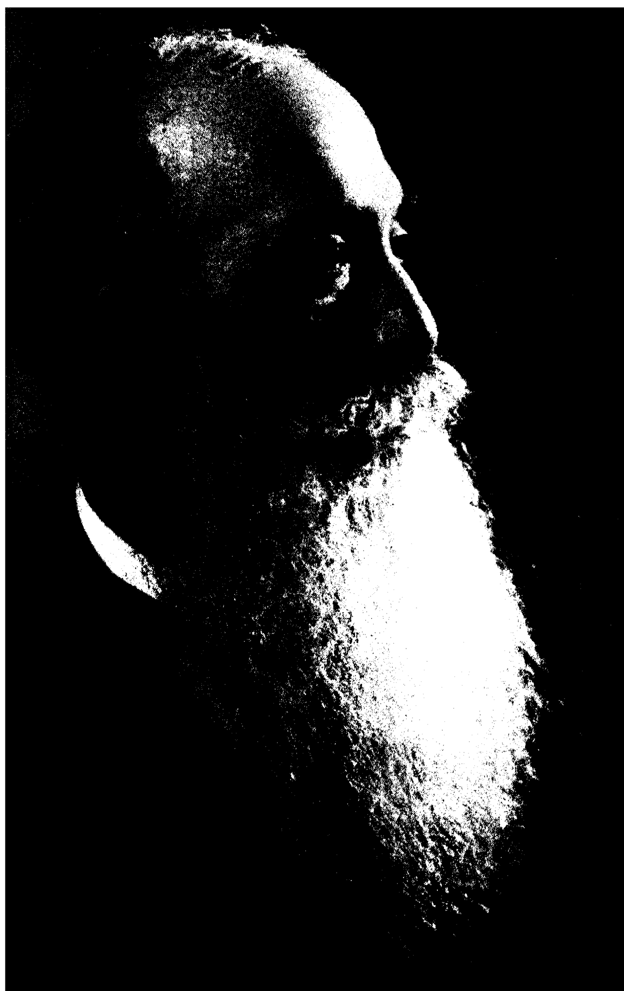


SONGS IN EXILE

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BY

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1938

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PREFACE

It was hardly to be expected that these simple, old-style verses of mine would find favour with any publisher in a country where the fashion now is to invoke, not the ancient divinity of Mount Parnassus, but the ultra-modern, pseudo-Muse of the *Waste Land.* And what a poor source of inspiration! since the sorry creature, being herself without a spark of the divine fire, can do no more than arouse in her votaries a pedantic ambition to dazzle the reader by novel forms and phrases, which, after all, merely bore or bewilder him. My own allegiance continues firm as ever to the ancient divinity who has been so gracious to me all these years. Such being the case, the modernists are bound to condemn the *Songs in Exile* as too simple, perhaps even as simpler than anything since Wordsworth.

Of these eighty songs one half are entirely new; the other half, shown with an asterisk in the table of contents, have been taken from my published books and revised. The earliest of them *(The Neglected Wife)* was written thirty-five years ago, but the latest *(An Urdu Song)* only last year, at the age of sixty-five: I am now sixty-six.

My first volume appeared in 1895. Since then seven others have been published, every successive venture leaving me poorer and poorer and bringing me more and more the

sneers of the people among whom I move. One of them said of the present volume that it was absolutely uninteresting, and added: "Luckily nobody cares for your poetry." These sad experiences, however, have never affected the even tenor of my life; and despite them and poor circumstances I have—thanks to my Muse—enjoyed many occasions of exalted happiness.

September 1938 J. F.

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TO THE MEMORY

OF

MY SON FRANCIS

THE SUBJECT OF SOME OF MY CHILD POEMS

SONGS IN EXILE

The Picture

Before my life there hung a picture,
  And it was all my heart desired:
The paddy fields so fair they spread,
Each hill it raised its dreamy head
  And dreamy thoughts inspired!

And on one hill was seen a cross,
  And there, with arms about it, lay
A ragged child, and, hov'ring near,
A shadowy form that seemed to cheer
  And call the child away.

But one sad night a storm arose,
  And I awoke with nameless fears:
The fields and hills how changed they were!
No more the shadowy form was there,
  The child lay pierced with spears!

Via Sacra

When foes and seeming friends conspired
  To load me with disgrace,
And some old women burst in tears
  At seeing my blood-stained face,

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A voice across the buried years
  Cried out in accents deep,
"Ye daughters of Jerusalem,
  Weep not over me, but weep

For yourselves and for your children!"
  And right before me stood
The churchyard with each cross, the folk,
  And the choir-master good.

Thus at the Via Sacra had
  He cried in tones benign,
And touched the heart of everyone,
  Of everyone but mine.

Nay, I had mocked him, I alone
  Of all the pious throng;
And, doubtless, in this wise at last
  Had Time avenged the wrong.

The Flight

Like a thief I slunk away.
  "Are you leaving us?"
Asked the palm-trees, bending low.
  "He's deceiving us,"
Cried the birds; "we too will go"—
  And they followed me.
I heeded not but hung my head:
  My heart was dead in me;
The world I loved was dead,
  The rest was naught to me—
And like a thief I fled.

On the way I sold the house,
For a bagatelle.
"Judas! Judas!" croaked the crows,
"Sure to burn in hell!"
From his grave my father rose,
Rose and followed me.
I smote my breast, my dead heart bled
And made the sign on me:
Strange worlds before me spread,
My world was lost to me—
And like a Cain I fled.

Say No More

"On this bench you sat together,
Always smiling, to each other."—
Cruel memory, say no more.
"Here's the courtyard where you gamboled,
There the hillock where you rambled."—
Cruel memory, say no more.
"There the cross and cashew-tree."—
Say no more, oh say no more—
Would the earth were over me!

Across the Ghats.

Great hills upon great hills, you say,
On every side they rise?
One little hill 'tis all I see—
O friend, cover mine eyes.

And houses scattered far and wide
On every hill, you say?
One little house 'tis all I see—
Now close mine eyes, I pray.

And to and fro the folk they go?
One man alone I see,
A dead man too, he digs a grave—
Dear friend, pray bury me.

The Ferry

There stood but one hut
And a temple all hoary,
Though the harvest was near
And the fields were in glory.

The ferryman free
In his boat at the ferry
(A merry man he)
Was humming all merry.

The ferryman's wife
Was the threshold adorning,
And singing as sweet
As a dhyal in the morning.

And the ferryman's child
Came down to the jetty
Crying, "Baksheesh, saib, baksheesh!"
And the child was so pretty!

But soon crossing the stream,
I wayworn and weary,
It all passed like a dream—
Oh the corner so cheery!

The Hymn

As we three left the village
We heard some children sing
A hymn to Blessed Mary
And the small church bell ring.
"For pity stay a while,"
My heart said with a smile;
But Fate she would not stay,
And dragged us both away.

Praise be to Blessed Mary!
Across the hills and seas
The hymn it followed us;
And now, on every breeze,
My heart and I can hear
Its cadence just as clear:
We turn to Fate and say,
"Come drag the hymn away!"

My Fatherland

Because of knaves and fools
I fled my fatherland,
My poor dear fatherland;
Now with an aching heart
I wander, far, apart.

Ah, what is this I see?
Green hills on either hand—
Green hills of my fatherland—
They rise and stare at me!

Into this church I'll go
And on my knees I'll pray,
To Mary Mother pray;
Such faith have I in prayer
No hills shall rise up there.
But what is that I see?
My mother! clear as day
I see her kneel and pray—
Oh it will madden me!

The White Bird

Dedicated to my dear kinsmen Hipolito João Furtado and José Manuel Santana Furtado, through whose kindness my ancestral house has been restored to me.

What a God-forsaken place!
Yet was it a pleasant valley,
With the house where I was born
And the gentle hill behind it,
That but now I'd looked upon.
And two owllike birds from thither
Came and perched upon the tree
Right above, and, me beholding,
With one voice they cried, "'Tis he!
Wand'ring homeless seven years past—
Now the white bird comes at last."
Goranpoki birds were they, I know,

My good old grandaunt spoke about
In the fairy tales she told us,
Little children, long ago.

Strangely now my heart is throbbing;
Sure enough the bird is coming,
  Coming, coming, coming;
I hear the flutter of its wings
Above the bell my father rings,
The bell of Candelaria!
And there I see the blessed Lady,
On the altar see Her stand,
Not wroth as last I saw Her,
In my flight across the land,
When She had chid me, saying:
  "Why comest thou to Me?
  If Heaven hath punished thee,
As Heaven is to others
  Thy country was to thee!"
But full of love and pity.
And the Christ-child in Her arms—
  "Follow me! follow me!"—
He's smiling—look! and calling:
  "Follow me! follow me!"
    O sweet and clear
    Upon mine ear
The Child's sweet words are falling—
  "Follow me! follow me!"—
Waking hopes of bliss untold.

But, lo, what bird is this above me?—
  "Follow me! follow me!"—
A silver bird with human voice?
Where's the blessed Child and Mother?—

"Follow me! follow me!"—
Or hath the Child become a bird?
Then why am I so strangely stirred,
And the bird's voice like a balm
It soothes my troubled heart?
Yea, I'll follow thee, my little bird,
Follow thee as once I followed,
Across a lonesome wild
For full seven years, a child;
When at every step mine eyes
Had had peeps at paradise.
Gladly will I follow thee;
But hasten not thus, I implore,
Yea hasten not, good bird,
For bare my feet are, bare and sore.
Look, e'en the wayside flowers
They pity me, poor things:
This balm misfortune brings;
Not so in the happier years
When I was wont to say,
"Good morning, little ones!"
And my eyes would fill with tears!
What cared ye for an old man's greeting?
And now we meet—how sad a meeting!
Enough, enough, ye pity me!

"My son! my son!"—
Sure I heard a voice!
Or is it the winds that moan
In yonder glen?—
"My son! my son!"—
There again!—and like mine own;
The voice I feared yet live to bless—
"My son! my son!"—

Thy voice, stern prophetess!
Ah, hadst thou not prophesied,
The deed I had not done;
'Twas thy words, more than my pride,
Impelled me and I fell:
Forgive, forgive thy son!
Lo, the mark upon my brow
A wand'rer makes of me,
So stern was Fate's decree,
And stern as Fate wert thou.
Yet, mother, it is well:
Had not thy sternness made me strong,
Could I my fate have borne so long?

Bird, what hill is this before us?
Strange the hopes that rise in me.
See how glad, though night's descending,
See how glad I follow thee.—
Hark the bell!
The bell of Candelaria!
Well I know it, well;
Would know it from a thousand others,
The dear dear bell of Candelaria!—
"Virgem Purissima,
Senhôra Mãe de Deus,
Rogae á Jesus por nós!"—
And the hymn—the blessed hymn,
Children sing, with joyful hearts,
Before our Lady's shrine—
How it swells upon the breeze,
Then, floating down the hillside, comes
And fills my heart with joy divine!

But what dear hill is this?

And how came I upon its side?
Can it be the fateful hill
Where Christ our Lord was crucified?
Something, up the slope,
Something like a cross I see,
A white bird poised above....
Not a cross but crucifix
It hangs upon a wall,
(The bird too is but a dove)
And one on bended knee
Before it....'tis a hall....
A room....my mother's room....
There is she! my stern, pious mother
(Stern, yet how dear!),
A censer in her hand—
What sweet perfume!—
How came I here?....
Doth she not see me? yet I feel
She knoweth I am near
(Beside her let met go and kneel)
Or seeth and doth not care?—
O thoughtless one!
Did she e'er turn aside from prayer?—
And, now she prayeth for her son,
The house might fall about her ears,
Never will she turn, O never!....
But what is this she's doing?....hath done?-
O mine eyes they are blind with tears....
With ashes from the censer she
Hath crossed the mark upon my brow—
Hath crossed it out for ever!....

What sweet sensations thrill me now!
What visions beautiful I see!....

That's my sire, my gentle sire,
Ringing the bell,
The dear dear bell of Candelaria!.
And those others they must be
Forbears of mine
Eager all to welcome me....
Children, angels, seraphim
Sing the blessed blessed hymn—
O the melody divine!....

To an Angel

Child, when you dropped down from the sky
Into mine arms with many a cry,
Where was I, my child,
Where was I
When you dropped down from the sky?...
Upon a lonesome wild.

Child, when I look into your eyes
My heart it thrills with sweet surprise,
What do I see, dear child,
What do I see
When I look into your eyes?...
A garden undefiled.

And from that garden these sweet flowers
Were plucked while there I strolled for hours:
Take them all, my Sweet,
Take them all,
From that garden these sweet flowers—
I lay them at your feet.

Venite, Adoremus

Babe of Bethlehem,
We're children from the Foundling Home
Come joyful to adore Thee:
Gifts have we none, but take our hearts—
Our hearts we lay before Thee.

Babe of Bethlehem,
We held a lantern in the dark
And cried, "Behold the Star!
Come hasten, hasten as they did—
The kings who came from far."

Babe of Bethlehem,
We find Thee, lo, in a poor shed
(They found us on the street),
Yet art Thou happy, so are we—
And kiss Thy little feet.

A Cradle Song

Please teach me, mother dear,
A pretty cradle song,
And short and sweet, not long;
But with a neat neat rhyme,
And with a sweet sweet chime;
To sing in the ear ear ear
Of baby dear dear dear—
To sing it all the time
And make him go to sleep.

O look now, mother dear,
How baby in sweet surprise
He opens wide his eyes
To hear the song I make
For sweet sweet baby's sake;
To sing in the ear ear ear
Of baby dear dear dear—
To sing it when awake
And make him go to sleep.

O hear now, mother dear,
What baby has to say—
He wants to fly away;
He's quite as big as I,
Says he, and means to fly
On these his wee wee feet,
And hands so sweet sweet sweet.—
Now where does baby cry?
Poor baby's fast asleep.

Dreams in Childhood

Dear mother, now in heaven,
  A dreamy child she thought me,
But bless my happy childhood
  And the sweet dreams it brought me!

If mother woke up early,
  When birds to song are given,
I pleaded, "Do not wake me,
  I hear the birds in heaven."

Under the Mango-Tree

You are so tall,
O mango-tree!
We are so small,
O mango-tree!
Your mangoes all
Red ripe we see—
Do let them fall,
Dear mango-tree!

Come winds, come blow!
This mango-tree
Won't pity show
Though we hungry be;
Blow winds and throw
The fruit we see;
Blow, dear winds, blow!—
There!—one, two, three!

When I was a Child

My world was once within four hills
  And I therein a pet;
The sun it rose behind one hill,
  Behind another set.

The moon, the sky, and all the stars,
  I thought, were not so far;
Indeed sometimes I talked to them,
  And counted every star.

And all the people they were kind,
  And most of children good;
And many a child would come to play,
  And some would come for food.

'Twas nice to see them come and go,
  But nicer, I must say,
To see the pig come grunting home
  To mother's *ay! ay! ay!*

The pig it was my dearest pet,
  Though birds, and dogs and cats
I liked them much, but know not why
  I screamed at sight of rats.

And there was one I did not like—
  An ugly drunkard man—
And, if I saw him passing by,
  Inside the house I ran.

He dug the graves and rung the bell,
  And said they, one and all,
That none could ring so well as he,
  At feast or funeral.

But best I liked the beggarmen,
  I liked to give them rice;
In small but many handfuls gave—
  So nice I felt, so nice.

And when the feast of flowers came round,
  That came but once a year,
I went with flowers to church, and knelt
  And prayed with father dear.

I knelt and prayed to *Mãe de Deus*
That I all good might be;
Then threw the flowers about Her feet,
And sweet She smiled on me.

Now gone is all the joy of life,
And this the greater pain:
Whate'er I be I ne'er can be
That happy child again.

GREETINGS

At sunrise o'er the hills
As I go a-whistling gay,
The birds from many a tree,
"Good-morning, poet!" they say.
It thrills me so, that I
Can hardly make reply,
But in my heart I bless them.

At sunset I return
A-thinking all the way,
And, to the birds about,
"Good-night, dear birds!" I say.
If none of them replies
Because of heavy eyes,
Sure in their hearts they bless me.

HOW THE CORN GROWS

One autumn morn
I chanced to cross

A field of corn;
And there it was,
That blessed morn,
To sinful me
The grace was given
On earth to see
The ways of Heaven:
I saw a bird
And heard a voice
I ne'er before
Had seen or heard.
I did rejoice,
Yet with my joy
Was holy awe
At what I saw;
And what I said
I know not well,
For, strange to tell,
I instantly
Was on my knee.

The bird saw too,
Yet did not stir;
And, "Who are you
To ask me, sir?"
It said, and I
Did thus reply,
Grown bolder now,
I know not how:
"An untaught poet
Of trees and birds,
Whom no man knoweth,
And, wanting words,
But dreams and sings

Of simple things."—

"Peace! all Heaven knoweth;
From Heaven come I:
Come, simple poet,"
The bird rejoined.

So I drew nigh
And heard it say,
That blessed day,
To an ear of corn,
A tiny ear
Then newly born:
"Grow quick, my dear!
There's dearth and death
On every hand,
In every breath
Upon this land—
Grow quick, my dear!"

Then was revealed
At every ear,
Throughout the field,
A bird, and clear
A voice, "Spare, spare!"
Was it my prayer
That blessed morn
While I did cross
The field of corn?
Perchance it was:
To sinful me
Such grace was given—
On earth to see
The ways of Heaven!

Salisbury Park
(Poona, India)

When the first time I
Crossed Salisbury Park,
There was nobody there,
But alone in the sky
Was singing a lark:
We two from the world were apart—
The bird in the sky,
Upon the earth I—
And a strange joy played round my heart!

The Farmer's Wife

A small green hill, an evenfall,
And, swaying upon a thorn,
A bulbul—to its mate doth call:
Delighted I look on.—
How soft and tranquil all!

Who comes?—A woman young and fair,
A child against her hip;
Sweet mogras round the knot of hair,
A lilt upon her lip.—
How sweet is all the air!

Upon the ground the child she lays
And plucks the cashews red:
Some farmer's wife, but the sun's rays
A glory round her shed.—
Happy must be her days!

To Monsoon Butterflies

Welcome, pretty butterflies
Coming gaily through the skies;
In a distant land I roam,
You are coming from my home,
You are coming from the south—
Come now kiss me on the mouth:
You did kiss my little one
While he played out in the sun;
Come then kiss me on the mouth,
You are coming from the south.

Come, ye dear ones, bring us rain,
Come and gladden hill and plain;
It was *he* had told me all—
With your coming rain must fall-
Come now kiss me for his sake,
Take a thousand kisses, take:
Father dear is dead and gone,
I am left here all forlorn;
Come then kiss me for his sake,
Take a thousand kisses, take.

The Stray Monsoon Butterfly

Poor dear butterfly!
It has lost its way,
Knows not what to do;
Lost its poor head too—
Just as I too may—
'Mid these flats and wires.

Poor dear butterfly!
Gay had left its home,
Safe had crossed the sea,
Sad its thoughts must be—
Worse than wild sea foam
Finds the homes of men.

Pretty butterfly,
No more flights now take
Lest thou break thy wings
'Gainst these horrid things,
And my heart too break—
With thy broken wings.

Pretty butterfly,
Glad I'll shelter thee;
Come and take thy rest
Safe upon my breast;
Come, O come to me
That so love thy kind.

To the Dhyal

Though many a bird of brighter wing
There be and some that sweeter sing,
And the birds I love be many,
Yet I love thee best of any,
For ne'er was bird to man, I ween,
What thou, dear bird, to me hast been.

I loved thy song from cradle days,
And oft I tried to sing thy praise:
All my childhood thou didst brighten,

All my burdens thou didst lighten,
And this return I make to thee
Is naught beside thy gifts to me.

Each morn and eve, this many a year,
I've sought this place thy song to hear:
Though my hopes of fame have fled now,
And my dreams of life be dead now,
Thank God, one blessing still is mine—
Thy gentle self—then why repine?

The Munias' Nest

In the valley as I rambled,
  Sad with thoughts of childhood days,
Though the birds sung loud about me,
  How could they my spirits raise?
All they sung was, "Never, never
  Will return thy childhood days."

Then I saw a pair of munias—
  Happy as birds in paradise—
Make a nest, and sadness left me,
  Changing so my heart and eyes,
One wild moment I a child was,
  And this earth a paradise.

The Secret

Every year thou flowerest, tamarind,
And the sunbirds seek thee as of old;
Every day gay children, tamarind,

Come to gambol round thee as of old;
And, lo, every hour of every day
All these years I've waited, tamarind—
Be thou silent to the last, I pray;
It was all so fated, tamarind.
Pride consumes him, said they, tamarind,
And no pity had they, tamarind;
Thou the secret keep now, tamarind,
Keep it till all secrets are made known,
For I go to sleep now, tamarind,
Till o'er all the trumpet's blown!

An Urdu Song

You ask me how I am
But I make no reply;
You think me unpolite—
I'm simply shy.

You take my hand in yours
And tears come to mine eye;
You call me timid dove—
I'm simply shy.

You raise your eyes to mine
But I look down and sigh;
You fear I do not love—
I'm simply shy.

To a Chorus Girl

It was the star I'd longed to see,
  Not you, poor chorus girl.
While she unblushing gazed at me
You made a gesture full of grace
And with your saree veiled your face—
  That haunts me night and day.

Her face is bright, but yours is sweet,
  So sweet, dear chorus girl,
I fain would kiss your very feet.
Her beauty may the senses charm,
Yours to my heart will be like balm—
  And soothe it night and day.

Long Time Ago

I knew a sweet maiden
With beautiful eyes,
  Long time ago;
I have seen many eyes
But no pair like hers—
  They haunt me so!

She lived on the field side
In a mean little hut,
  Long time ago;
I lived on the hill side
In a clean little house—
  And hence mine woe.

And never the sun rose,
And never the sun set,
  Long time ago—
No matter what weather—
But found us together,
  And watched us grow.

Two light-hearted children
With smiles we had parted,
  Long time ago;
Of partings and pain,
Of life and its struggles,
  What could we know?

I am seated now lone
On the steps we sat on,
  Long time ago—
Oh to see once again
The beautiful eyes
  That haunt me so!

The Mullah's Daughter

Because the mosque upon the mainland
  Is much too far away,
The Moslems now have one on th'island,
  And full five times can pray.
A sorry fellow is their mullah,
  But oh the mullah's daughter!

As oft I stand the mosque admiring—
  Conceit it makes them blind—
They think that I have Moslem leanings,

The mullah too is kind.
A sorry fellow though the mullah,
Quite peri-like's his daughter.

"No trifling, saib, with Moslem beauties;
My daughter can be thine—
Be first a Moslem," says the mullah,
"And give up pork and wine."
A sorry fellow is that mullah,
But I mean have his daughter.

The Pariah Girl

I see her every day—
And ne'er without a thrill—
The sylph-like pariah girl
Returning from the mill.

Oh let the Brahmin say
Her touch would taint his soul;
I'll strike my breast and hope
The touch will make me whole.

When first I spoke to her
In arms she held a child.
"Is that your child?" I'd asked.—
"No," she'd replied—and smiled.

That smile hath me undone
And gives my mind no rest,
With thinking if ever I
Shall press her to my breast.

Dreams of Life

Such dreams were mine,
Though late in autumn they come true,
When leaves are yellow
And pleasures mellow;
But wonders too the gods will do
When dreams, like mine,
Are nigh divine.

Now all day long
Content I sit, and dream I hear
The palm-trees shady
Praising my lady,
Whose anklets dear keep jingling near,
And out, ere long,
There comes a song.

And glad feel I
When at my feet she takes her seat,
And reads out stories
Of Vedic glories,
And makes my dreams of life complete,
With hopes long I
Might death defy.

The Stranger

When the shades of night were falling,
And the birds each other calling
In the trees and temple eaves,
While the folk, with jest and laughter,
Slowly home returned with sheaves—

Softly, like a serpent gliding,
Came he through the bylanes hiding.—
  Beware, my child, beware!

All the village, lost in wonder,
Round the stranger stood to ponder
  What might be his creed and land,
Since not one among the pundits
  Could his language understand;
But so strangely sung and played he,
Of their hearts mere playthings made he.—
  Beware, my child, beware!

Village matrons veiling faces,
Village maids robed like the Graces,
  On their way to or from the well,
Round the stranger long would loiter:
  While their bosoms rose and fell
At each word he sung or uttered,
How their wild doves leapt and fluttered!—
  Beware, my child, beware!

Once the rajah, flaunting sashes,
And his bride with drooping lashes,
  Riding past, had paused to hear:
Why so pale had turned the stranger?
  Had his looks not shown some fear?
Sure his voice had strangely altered,
Sure his fingers too had faltered.—
  Beware, my child, beware!

When the day was slowly breaking,
And the birds each other waking,
  Loud was heard the palace gong.

Dumb with terror was the village—
  Why the mournful tale prolong?
Great my dread when love-light flashes,
As in thee, through drooping lashes.—
  Beware, my child, beware!

The Neglected Wife
(A Goa Song)

Three years this day, nor more nor less,
  Though married I have been,
I know not yet what's marriage like,
  And now I'm past eighteen;
And this young age creates a rage
Of such desires, upon my breast
This end of saree *will not* rest.

My husband he to Bombay went
  Now three years and a day:
He writes but seldom, never writes
  When home return he may—
While all declare I'm young and fair;
But what is beauty, youth to me,
Deprived of love and liberty?

On Sundays, when to church I go,
  For love, not God, I yearn;
The young men there they smile to me,
  And I their smiles return.
May God forgive the life I live,
But when I think upon my lot
I can't suppress the sinful thought.

Last week I went to a wedding feast;
  The young man I dined beside
And danced with once he danced and said,
  "Would that you were my bride!"
I felt so glad, I felt so sad,
But felt too shy to make reply,
And tear on tear came to mine eye.

This morning I confessed in hopes
  Some comfort I might win:
Fool that I was! the cold old priest
  Sees naught besides my sin.
I feel so sad, I feel so bad,
May God upon me pity take—
I feel my heart is like to break!

Brahmin Girls

I've seen the East, I've seen the West,
  And truth it bids me this declare,
Of all the girls the Brahmin girls
  Are fairest of the fair:
The Brahmin girls, the Brahmin girls,
  The Brahmin girls so fair,
Upon their nose the ring of pearls
  And jasmine in their hair.

No more your Lauras, Kates or Jeans,
  Your eyes of blue or locks of gold;
Mohini sweet, a girl as sweet
  I never shall behold;
Mohini sweet, Mohini neat,
  So madd'ning to behold,

With *kinning chinning* round her feet
  And *fas fis* of her fold.

I met a girl at Nasik fair,
  A Brahmin girl of beauty rare,
She smiled so sweet when I did greet
  As bade me not despair;
But said all rude—confound the prude,
  She'll drive me to despair—
"Before I wed go shave your head,
  All save a tuft of hair."

To Gray-Eyes

What hour the dear birds go to roost
  I come to you, Gray-Eyes:
A witching hour indeed, but not
  So witching as you, Gray-Eyes.

What time the moon shines bright and full
  I gaze on you, Gray-Eyes:
The moon I find it fair, but not
  So fair as you, Gray-Eyes.

When first the dew-drops kiss the rose
  I too kiss you, Gray-Eyes:
Ah sweet is then the rose, but not
  So sweet as you, Gray-Eyes.

Though not a few to me are dear—
  Just as to you, Gray-Eyes—
Not one is dear as you: am I
  As dear to you, Gray-Eyes?

Spring is Coming!

All day long a voice keeps humming,
"Spring is coming! spring is coming!"
But no joy there comes to me.
All in flower silk-cotton trees
Every side I see them rise,
Full of starlings, mynas, crows
Sipping honey with merry cries:
"Spring is coming! spring is coming!"
Yet no joy there comes to me;
No joy comes because of thee—
False Gray-Eyes, because of thee!

The Letter

Five years this day
I came away
From her I love,
And for whose sake
I'd made my foe
The world below
And heaven above,
Though Christ had come between us.

My parting threat
She'd smiled thereat
With cruel disdain,
So glad was she
The way was clear
For one more dear
I might have slain,
Had Christ not come between us.

Five years—five years
Of sighs and tears—
And never a token;
Nor, till her love
Is off his head
And worse than dead,
The silence broken,
For Christ had come between us.

In words that bite
She dares now write:
"I know you're good—
For love of Christ
Forgive, forget,
And trust me yet;"
And fain I would,
But Christ will come between us.

A Double Dream

She was making her toilet,
When I stole from behind
And covered her eyes;
And I read in the mirror,
"She loveth thee duly
Or this blush would not rise;'
And I read on her mind,
"Had he loved me not truly,
Would he come from behind
And cover mine eyes?"

To myself then said I:
"It was only a dream,

And the serpent seen there
Awaiting to bite me,
And my true love resembling,
All empty as air—
When are dreams what they seem?"
And I woke up a-trembling:
It was only a dream,
And the serpent was there!

Love and Pride

Dance and music in the house!
Far from fair, they think, the bride;
One fair woman's all I see,
Sad at heart she waits for me:
Short the road to reach her side—
Why not let old bygones be?
Thy pride may prove the curse of thee.

Wine and cheers within the hall!
Bride and groom a happy pair!
One sad woman's all I see,
Sighs and waits in vain for me:
Haste, thou wretch, and soothe the fair-
Why prolong this agony?
Thy pride may prove the death of thee.

Tables Turned

So glad I made her suffer!
Won't she burst now into tears
At sight of me, cruel-hearted,

Made her suffer six long years!
But gladly she'll forgive me
Soon as I have kissed her tears.

But here's the house, an angel's:
Enter we now heaven, my heart....
Good God—a bride and bridegroom!
Soft the glances she doth dart.
I'd feel it less, cruel woman,
Hadst thou stabbed me to the heart!

The Broken Heart

You have broken my heart, Gray-Eyes,
And I die ere my time:
God forgive you the crime!
But I won't tarry there,
Be the place e'er so fair
And called heaven or paradise.
What am I to do there?
I want nothing but you, Gray-Eyes.
So mind, you cruel woman, mind:
When dressing your hair
I will come from behind
And cover your eyes.

Limbo

If e'er I sneered at mother
When I found her praying
That heathens might be Christians,
She would chide me, saying:

"You know not, son, of limbo
  Where the heathens go;
Naught like its awful darkness
  Find we here below.

To think of human beings
  Doomed to such a fate!"—
"Or," thoughtless I would break in,
  "Kicked from heaven's gate!

Nay, rather be a heathen
  And in darkness dwell
Than be a Christian burning
  In the fires of hell."

At this retort poor mother,
  With her eyes to heaven,
Would strike her breast, imploring
  I might be forgiven.

But I did truly mean it,
  And of limbo thought
As of a cave with benches,
  Nor so sad the lot

But, God a comrade granting
  Either side of me,
I might, in friendly converse,
  Pass eternity....

Last night I died, a heathen,
  And in limbo rose,
And found myself—oh horror!—
  'Tween my deadliest foes.

Cumballa
(Near the Mahalakshmi Battery)

Not all my life is quite so dreary
But that a day can make it cheery.
Thus thinking I, each Saturday,
To dear Cumballa take my way;
Cumballa, where I make this ditty,
A pretty place in Bombay city,
Where come, all graceful as the Graces,
Brahmin girls with sandalled feet,
And English *mems.* with painted faces,
Fondling each a poodle sweet;
Where bustling ayahs, running after
Naughty *babs* in pinafore,
Oft make the Tommies burst in laughter—
Such their English terms galore.
Ah, dear Cumballa, what a pity
I must leave thy pleasant shore,
And ducks and pomfrets, dear dear city,
I shall taste them nevermore!

To the Mandovi

Take it not ill, I entreat thee,
That with no raptures I greet thee,
Dear River Mandovi:
Careworn and weary I meet thee,
Dear River Mandovi.

Many great churches adorn thee,
Many bright sons have been born thee—
God prosper all, Mother!—

Who among them looked so upon thee
 As I do, O Mother?

Some for thy rich leaping treasure,
Others with motives of pleasure,
 May love thee, Mandovi;
Who loves thee, as I beyond measure,
 For thy own sake, Mandovi?

Ne'er a year passed but I sought thee,
Ne'er a night came but it brought thee
 In dreams to me, Mother;
Rev'rently now I have wrought thee
 A love-wreath, O Mother!

Poor though the gift, like the giver,
All my heart goes with it, River,
 Dear River Mandovi;
Goes to thee, now and for ever,
 O Mother Mandovi!

My Native Land

Hills and valleys everywhere,
On each hill a cross or shrine,
In each valley cots and farms:
Other lands may be as fair,
Yet what land, what land but mine,
Is so blest with homely charms?
Land of palm and cashew-tree,
Dear as life art thou to me!

Sweet Home

A little hill with cashew-trees,
And on its slope a little cot,
With sweet and tender memories
Buzzing like bees about the spot:
My feet may wander where they will,
My heart ne'er leaves the little hill!

The Choir-Master

Ne'er came Death into our village
  But it brought me grace;
I would join the sad procession
  To the resting-place.

Then I heard the dear choir-master
  (Old was he and kind)
Chanting deep the *Miserere*
  Brought me peace of mind.

Such the peace, at every burial,
  "May he live," said I,
"Live to chant the *Miserere*
  O'er me when I die!"

Now that comfort 'tis denied me,
  Wherefore, God knows best:
This sad day the good old master
  He was laid to rest!

The Village Cowboy

He haunts me yet—the little boy—
With cries of pain or songs of joy;
At break of day he took our cows,
And as he went from house to house
He sung, the merry boy.

"Boys," every morn would mother say,
"There's Pedro singing—rise and pray.'
And never rose we from the bed
But prayed that Pedro might be dead.
We did, indeed, so pray,

Until one morn it came to pass
A snake lay hiding in the grass
And bit him, and, for all they tried,
The boy in agonies he died:
They moaned, "Alas! alas!"

'Tis many a year, the same old way
The village goes, and ever may;
But as I tread each quiet lane
The poor boy's cries I hear again—
Would he were live to-day!

Ruzai

I would my sleep had endless been,
So had my joy been endless too;
I saw him spread the altar cloth,
As here on earth he used to do.

The village tailor was Ruzai,
He made no more than common clothes;
Such things as tail-coats dreaded he,
And ladies' frocks with furbelows.

What though he worked from dawn to dusk,
The village folk they thought him slow.—
"And were I quicker," he would say,
"Could I to heaven the quicker go?

No, quick or slow, 'tis all the same;
Our days on earth they are but four;
Yet those who serve the Church may hope—
Pray make me sacristan, senhôr."—

I then was just a little lad,
But soon as I became a man
Ruzai attained his heart's desire,
For he became our sacristan.

Oft did I watch him serve at Mass
Or put the sacred vestments by;
Long in the vestry lingered he,
And never left without a sigh.

I would my sleep had endless been
Or good Ruzai had been my guide,
These torments then would not be mine;
In peace could I have lived and died.

The Cobra

Never before, in all these years,
Had he appeared by day,
Though known to hide among the stones
That near the jack-tree lay.

But oft had he at night been seen—
A terror to all around—
The deadly cobra, for whose bite
A cure may not be found.

So folk, though come with sticks and stones,
Affrighted back have hung:
With hood spread out the snake has stopped
And shoots his forky tongue.

Here from the crowd a fearless boy
Darts forth—beware, beware!
But one deft stroke and all is o'er—
A writhing form lies there.

Now safe the good old sacristan
To church at night may go;
Nor need again walk past the tree
With wary steps and slow.

And, good folk, give ye thanks to God
Hath rid ye of this bane,
And ask not what *his* murmurs mean—
The fool will never explain.

A Good Friday

When his corse they lowered no bell was ring-
Gone for ever!— [ing—
Only people, in the church, were singing
Stabat Mater;
Yet from every quarter winds came sighing
Gone for ever!
Where upon the floor a child was lying—
Faint, poor child, with pain and crying,
Faint as ever!

Two score years and still the words are ring-
Gone for ever!— [ing—
Still the people, in the church, are singing
Stabat Mater;
And they will until mine hour of dying—
Gone for ever!—
'Tis an iron fate I am defying—
Would I too in the grave were lying,
Quiet for ever!

Vishnulal

"I'm sorry, Vishnulal, though jewels
Full many you've in store,
The jewel I prize you never show."—
"What jewel mean you, senhôr?"—
"Your daughter, Vishnulal."—

"Just wait awhile, I'll call her out—
. Is Savitri not there?"
When soon a child of ten appeared,

And she was more than fair,
The child of Vishnulal.

No goldsmith round about but sure
A scoundrel born was he,
And cheated friend and foe alike;
Yet soon I came to be
A friend of Vishnulal.

And oft to him said I: "Think not
I flatter or deride,
But truly, friend, she's fair enough
To be a rajah's bride,
Your daughter, Vishnulal."

A lonely man was I, and fear
Lest Fate should make us part
Would steal upon me—Oh the child
Brought sunshine to my heart,
The child of Vishnulal.

But now it so befell there came
A scourge upon the land,
And cries of mourning, night and day,
Were heard on every hand.—
I feared for Vishnulal.

Nor long did Fate delay—one morn,
Though deaths had then been few,
Above the women's wail there rose
What pierced my poor heart through,
This cry of Vishnulal:

"Gone, gone—the rajah's bride—senhôr!

So true had come my fears....
A lonely man am I, and still
That cry rings in mine ears,
The cry of Vishnulal.

Birds and Neighbours

When I was young and went all day
Bird's-nesting, oft would neighbours say,
"The birds will be his ruin."

'Tis not with age my hair are gray,
And well the birds might turn and say,
"'Tis all his neighbours' doing."

The Prophet!

A man there was, had travelled wide,
Would come and sit all day
In our *balcão,* and tell with pride
Of countries far away.

And, if he caught me, as oft he did,
Coming from stream or hill,
He'd shake his head, would shake his head
And say, "Do what you will,

My friend, I fear this child of yours,
If once he leave his home,
His home and all he will forget,
And only love to roam."

Right well remember I his words,
  And how my sire he'd sigh:
The prophet! were he living now,
  He'd find his words a lie.

I've travelled far, I've travelled wide,
  The Ghats and Ganges seen,
But ne'er my village hills or streams
  Less dear to me have been.

The Last of Them

Only a poor old peasant dead,
The last of all the rustic band;
And yet the news hath made me sad:
Is it because he tilled our land?—
I seldom was so sad before.

Is it because he gave me joy
When drinking grog before our door,
And said, "Go fetch some pickle, boy"?
Now grog and pickle are no more—
I seldom was so sad before.

Is it because he wished me well
And gave me welcome to my land?—
And gave it first?—I cannot tell:
I'll shake no more a peasant's hand—
I seldom was so sad before.

Bygone Days

All day I ramble on the hills
Or loiter by the haunted rills,
    As in the days gone by:
The sweet birds all they sing as light,
The wild flowers too they blow as bright,
    As in the days gone by—
    Why rise tears to mine eye?

A Lesson

It was a pleasant morn
  And birds were piping gaily,
So pleasant was my walk—
  I love to take it daily.

And on my walk I met
  A woman—looked so wily—
Had oranges for sale,
  And her I questioned dryly:

"How much for one? no lies."—
  "Look, saib, to speak untruly
Four pice one, truly three;
  And, mind, I plucked them newly".—

"Three pice for one! two pice
  Are quite enough," I told her.—
"And nothing for myself,
  Big saib? Are you not older,

And richer? why not then
  Be kinder, saib, and wiser?"
The woman asked, and home
  Came I the less a miser.

And thus on every walk,
  While birds keep piping gaily,
In some such pleasant talk
  I learn a lesson daily.

The Bidee-Makers

The bidee-makers! every day
I see them, quiet they toil away.
  A little leaf,
  A little stuff—
  O not so much,
  Enough, enough—
  A little twist,
  A little thread,
  A little bidee*—
  A little bread!
All seated in a ring or row,
Upon the floor or in the loft,
They work, and chat, in tones but low:
Now what is it they say?—O soft!
"There goes the poor old man!"—the dears!—
A fountain, in a vale of tears!
I pity them, they pity me—
How good, O world, couldst thou not be!

*Indian cigarette.

Poor bidee-makers! on return
I see them still, though lights then burn.
  Two score bidees
  Mean three pice won;
  Now in one day
  How many done?
  Just twenty score,
  That's thirty pice—
  Is that enough
  To feed the mice?*
At last one woman, rising, cries,
"My noura† anxious he might be."
Another rises then and sighs,
"My children too they'll wait for me."
And there they go, the pair of them—
And wouldst thou kiss their garments' hem?
A little love, and ne'er a wife
Or mother will she tire of life.

The Milkman's Hut

Where this unsightly pile now stands
  There stood, not long ago,
A hut—I wonder what I meant
  To tell you, friend, or show.

A pigmy's hut, you might have thought,
  It had so small a door;
But, what with plantain-trees behind,
  A tulsi-plant before,

*Among Indians a term of endearment applied to little children.

†Bridegroom or young husband.

And, either side the tulsi-plant,
A guava-tree and palm,
The milkman's hut—for such it was—
Had quite a homely charm.

And many an evening did I come,
Despising every care,
To feast mine eyes upon this place
And breathe its pleasant air.

But come away, these simple things
Few heed or understand;
'Tis city sights you come to see—
And city sights are grand!

Mercy

What a lovely day!
Fresh a breeze is blowing
Across the earth,
And, from my heart,
Full the fountain flowing,
Of joy and mirth.

What now, over there,
Are the children doing,
Around the tree?
Looks like kittens playing,
Playing around and mewing:
We'll go and see.

All around its trunk
Sugar they are throwing

For ants to eat—
Poor little ants!—
Only mercy showing—
They find it sweet.

And the little ones
What may they be saying?
Naught can I hear,
But, in your heart,
Gay the fountain playing—
Come near, come near.

The Dear Hillside

Mansions, mansions all around—
Not one cottage anywhere!
Oh to see the dear old spot
With my own neat little cot
On the dear hillside!

Cars and gramophones all day—
Don't they drive me to despair!
Oh to hear the cattle lowing
And his pipe the herd-boy blowing
On the dear hillside!

Strangers, strangers every side—
From the windows how they stare!
Oh to feel the fresh green grass
One sweet hour with my own sweet lass
On the dear hillside!

My Friends

My friends are more than I can tell;
  I give here only three.
The first he blows the bugle well,
  A bugle-master he.

I meet him each and every day
  Where they the bugles blow;
He brings his child and makes him say,
  "Big saib, how far you go?"

The child, now comely to my mind,
  Was otherwise before;
And somehow day by day, I find,
  I like the urchin more.

Another friend, and very dear,
  With a tray large and round,
He sits and sweetmeats sells, anear
  Saint Mary's Church compound.

With *laddoos* for my child, one day,
  After me did he run;
I took the *laddoos*—naught did pay,
  Rememb'ring Mary's Son.

The third of friends (you'll scarce believe)
  Though lame I love him best;
Nay, should he fail to come one eve,
  My heart it hath no rest.

Father Hegglin, S. J.

Here comes good Father Hegglin,
  Umbrella under arm:
No, please, I may not meet him,
  My pride it takes alarm.

'Tis all that urchin's doing—
  Sudden he came and said,
"Mother says you're my father;
  Please, father, give some bread."

I laughed!—the Lord forgive me!
  I stood the church within,
They outside—couldn't have seen me,
  Yet *he* might see the sin.

"Yes, everybody's father,"
  Poor Father Hegglin said,
His face all strange and radiant;
  "Come, lad, I'll give you bread."

I'll hide behind this pillar;
  He never looks around:
His thoughts are up in heaven,
  His eyes are on the ground.

I'll hide myself and watch him;
  It somehow does me good...
Yes, I must try (God help me!)
  To live as good men should.

No Rest have I

No rest have I—all night
My spirit goes a-wandering;
Into a speck of dust he turns
And whirls away, a tiny thing;
For something seeks, for something yearns,
And flies and flies and flies
From star to star,
Away, afar;
At times exultant cries,
"I feel it on this cheek of mine,
I feel it glow—the touch divine!"
And home returns and makes a rhyme,
Or sits in silence all the time.

No rest have I—one night
He sought in haste a prison cell
Where, raging like a wild beast, lay
A felon doomed to death and hell,
And at his feet begun to pray:
"Cry thou for mercy, friend,
You'll mercy find;
God's just but kind,
God's mercy hath no end;
Repent, repent, and be forgiven;
He'll close down hell and open heaven."
But oh the terror I was in
While he stood near that man of sin!

No rest have I—last week
He tended flocks at Bethlehem,
And thence brought home some singing birds;
Now what, oh what have I with them,

These singing birds and flocks or herds?
No good these birds will bring,
For in my breast
They've made a nest,
And night and day they sing.
And how am I to earn my bread?
How long shall I be manna-fed?
No rest they give me night or day:
Good Angel, take the birds away.

A Reminder

One morn, beneath a roadside tree
Where I had sate me down,
I saw a fellow—seemed to me
Much like a country clown—

A thick and coarse chapatti* make
Upon a smouldering fire.
No cooking pot or pan had he,
Nor did perhaps require;

And, mark, to that chapatti naught
Of ghee† did he apply;
And much I marvelled one could eat
A thing so coarse and dry.

Mine angel here recalled how once
The troubadour divine
Poor Brother Masseo had rebuked
For views as wrong as mine.

*Unleavened bread. †Clarified butter.

And all at once I longed to taste
  That bread so coarse and dry,
And begged the man a piece and ate—
  Like manna from on high.

The Child of Light

Slow, one by one, the stars of night
They mount and shine athwart the sky
    And fade away;
Quiet, in the dark, the child of light
He works and waits, till night go by,
    To greet glad day!

The Scornful Bird

What blessings love may bring us,
  E'en love for beast or bird!
Ah ne'er should I have known it
  But for a bird I heard.

"The birds what makes you love them
  E'er since a little boy?"
Thus oft my heart had asked me.
  "Because they give me joy,"

As oft I'd answered warmly;
  And now this rich reward.
Think you my words are childish?—
  Pity the child, O Lord!

Day after day I heard it,
  Though never once for long;
As soon as I went near it
  The bird would stop its song;

Until a voice rebuked me,
  Saying, "Wretch, and wouldst thou moan?
This bird the world despises,
  And sings to God alone."

The Toiler

An old man cleft a mountain,
Now stopped awhile in pain:
At once there sprung a fountain;
He drank and toiled again.

Though dark the night that found him,
The old man would not rest;
But many a star was round him,
As if at God's behest.

Here someone flashed a dagger
And stabbed him in the back;
I saw the old man stagger
And fall—alack! alack!

An angel, soon descending,
His wound with balm did close,
And waited, o'er him bending,
Until the old man rose....

The angel hath departed;
The vision doth remain,
To cheer when heavy-hearted,
To bless when free from pain.

The Neglected Child

There again the child is crying,
Crawling on all fours and crying;
He crawls or rolls all o'er the place,
And soils his body and wee face,
While my heart 'tis all a-bleeding;
Yet I go about unheeding,
Though sure his face and cry
Will haunt me every hour
Until the hour I die.

Have thou pity, child, upon me—
Heavy, lo, God's hand is on me;
And, should thy parents find no grace,
I'll see no more thine angel face;
And, the angels me deriding,
In Her mantle I'll keep hiding
(She knows, She knows my heart)
Until the judgment end
And all the hosts depart.

How Long?

I sit on a stone
By the roadside alone
Pondering sadly;

In the grove cooes a dove
And a lark soars above
  Singing all madly.

And from over the hills
The slaves of the mills,
  Toiling there daily,
What though all night they weep on,
Now past me they sweep on
  Chattering gaily.

Oft a dragon at back,
On its grim iron track,
  Crawls with foul breath;
And the incessant roar
Of the waves on the shore
  Warns me of—death!

And I sit on this stone
By the roadside alone
  Lulling with song
The cries of my heart,
And at gloaming depart
  Musing, "How long?"

Resignation

A lark delirious sings above me,
"Love me, darling, love me, love me!"
Song and love is all thy pleasure—
  Sing on, dear bird, sing on.
Fate has filled me another measure;
  My songs are held in scorn,

My love's repaid with hate—
But thou, dear bird, sing on,
And leave me to my fate.

The kine contented, homewards going,
"Coming, coming!" they are lowing.
All day long your thoughts were turning
To the young ones in the shed.
All in vain my heart is yearning;
My young ones they have fled,
My home is desolate—
But speed ye to your shed,
And leave me to my fate.

Envy

I built myself a little shed,
And lived upon a crust of bread,
And drank of water for sweet wine,
Thinking, "To-morrow I'll be dead!"
And yet a life serene was mine,
Though none might envy; hearing which
A neighbour came, a neighbour rich.
"Pray come in, Sir," said I, "and share
With me to-day my frugal fare."
He came in gladly, shared my crust
And water saying, "Yea, we are but dust!"
That night my shed was set on fire,
By whom, not once did I inquire:
Methought, "To-morrow I'll be dead!"
And quietly raised another shed.

Christ with the Cross

I see the whole scene—just as 'twas—
And there is mother to aid the child
And light his memory where dim:
The Man of Sorrows with the cross,
The sorrowing painter at a loss
To please his wild and pitiless child,
Who yet shall live to bear his cross,
And there be none to pity him.

The sight another might appall,
But not that wild and fearless child,
Who now by signs makes known his whim:
The painter sighs and changes all—
The fainting Christ is made to fall.
He smiles—that wild and fearless child—
Whose hour shall come to faint and fall,
And no good Simon succour him.

More blood! more blood the brow must show,
Demands the wild and heartless child;
And watches. restless all and grim:
The paint and brush again, and, lo!
Profuse the blood is seen to flow.
He laughs—that wild and heartless child—
From whose own heart yet blood shall flow,
While his own children laugh at him!

Saint Anthony's Chapel

A coconut bowl in hand
I'll go all o'er the land,
A-begging go, for love
Of good Saint Anthony:
His chapel on the hill
It makes one sad to see;
O never will I rest
Until 'tis right again.
What loss, my friend, what loss?
(Begone, thou imp of hell!)
No, let me bear my cross.
Away now, for one year,
From town to town to roam.
Goodbye, O children dear!
Goodbye, my happy home!

But what am I to say
To folk to whom I go?
Ne'er thought of it before;
O yes, I know, I know—
Just this at every door:
"Good folk, an alms from ye
For poor Saint Anthony."
Away then, fool, away!
To him that flies from sin,
O good Saint Anthony,
How soon doth Heaven begin!

Goan Fiddler—O meri rani, amku deo tora pani.*

Lakshmi—I speaking English, saib.

Goan Fiddler—Very well, my English-speaking daughter, give me then a little water.

Lakshmi—Why little? drink plenty much. All peoples liking water of this well.

Goan Fiddler—Many thanks. Never expected to find in this out-of-the-way village a Hindu girl speaking English. And nice English too you speak, my daughter.

Lakshmi—I going to English school in Poona. "Smart thing, that goldsmith's daughter," teacher always saying. I no girl, saib, I marry.

Goan Fiddler—I know it, and have a child too—quite a beauty like its mother. You must let me see it.

Lakshmi—No, no, I have no got child, saib. You make me quite shame. Where you going, saib?

Goan Fiddler—There's no knowing where I may be going, so large is the sum required to put the chapel in repair. But God is great. For a handful of this rice people give me a handful of money. Rajah Balaram gave one hundred rupees. The rani is going to have a child after all. God is great, I say.

Lakshmi—And what they doing with the rice?

Goan Fiddler—Wonders, my daughter; mostly curing sick people.

*O my rani, give me a little water.

Lakshmi—Curing babies' dysentery, saib?

Goan Fiddler—O yes, any sickness of anyone.

Lakshmi—Please give me some, give me some, good saib. I giving you one rupee. Baby getting dysentery.

Goan Fiddler—But you have no baby, my poor daughter.

Lakshmi—I begging pardon thousand times. I afraid you making jadhoo,* and speak lie—begging pardon, good saib.

Goan Fiddler—Be not afraid, my good daughter. Take this rice, and, should your child be cured, give me what you like when I return this way next month. God bless you, my daughter!....

[*Solus*]—Enough to tempt a saint!
So simple too and kind:
"I no girl, saib, I marry."—
Indeed I must not tarry
Or look behind.

SAINT ANTHONY'S RICE

Rupees one thousand!—why,
I'm quite a millionaire;
One thousand in one month!
Now soon in good repair
The chapel it shall be.
It is that mission priest—
A learned man is he—
Has brought me this success,
He preached so at the feast
Of great Saint Anthony.

*Magic.

Good luck it chanced to fall
The day my work begun—
Well done, I say, well done!

A learned man is he,
And with his searching eyes
Begins to look at me
And says: "A servant you
Of good Saint Anthony?
You live with mummies then
And visions beautiful,
The envy of all men?"—
"The hermit saint, mean you?
And scourge myself and pray
And starve too all the time?
I'm only fit, they say,
For spinning yarns in rhyme.
And how could I behold
The visions and not sin?
Harmless enough I look,
Without, but look within—
Good father, pray for me!"
I say, and slip away
To escape his searching eyes,
For shrewd is he as wise.

Doubtless 'tis due to him
My fame has gone abroad,
And town and village now
Think more and more on God;
And folk from every part
They run to welcome me.
But what is it I give?
A handful of this rice.

What think you I receive?
Why, handfuls of bright coin—
Rupees, annas, or pice.
What wonders manifold
The Saint is working too,
If half of what is told
Be true!—but here's a proof;
See what a widow writes:
"The Saint has heard my vows,
My son has left off drink,
In peace again my house.
God speed you and your work!"
Think, doubting Thomas, think;
Your doubts are given the lie—
Praise be to God on high!

In the Ghats

It is a hillman, with his wife
And dusky children three,
Upon his way to yonder plains—
To find some work, says he.

To-night he rests upon this hill,
His asses all around;
His household goods and household gods
In little bundles bound.

The hungry beasts they seem to know
There's famine in the land,
For none dare eat the things there lie
But from their master's hand.

And all is quiet about the place,
And quietly I depart:
"A glimpse of heav'n in mercy giv'n
To quiet a troubled heart!"

Retreat

As down the hill at last I went,
Not e'en a growl the tiger gave,
Quiet in the sun the cobra lay;
Both feared the Master in the slave
And harmed me not upon my way.

"Men too shall doubtless fear me now,
For, like the Master's forty days,
My forty years of close retreat
Hath not been vain—to God all praise!-
And I but mean to wash their feet."

Thus thinking safe the plains I reached;
But, when the homes of men I neared,
A mob came shouting loud and shrill,
As if a wild beast had appeared,
And back they drove me to the hill.

Now all night long the tiger growls,
As by my cavern mouth he lies,
And oft with cries of fear I wake;
But, lo, the more by night the cries
The more by day the songs I make.

My World

My world through life had not been wide,
  But then the views were broad,
And I had found it passing fair—
  Praise be to God!

And now what though my world seem like
  A room scarce twelve feet square,
One window shows it e'er so wide
  And not less fair.

But widest, fairest sure to be
  What time my place of rest
Is six feet deep, for then my world
  Shall be God's breast.

Dharna River
(Near Nasik, India)

Take me, friend, to Dharna River
Where it flows by quiet Nanegaon;
  And leave me there to die,
  With not a mourner by,
But peaceful scenes around me....

Friend, we've reached the dear dear river;
There the cattle home returning;
  They'll cross the gentle tide,
  With that small boy as guide,
While doves keep cooing around me.

Leave me now to watch and listen:
Sweet soft tinklings, how they soothe me!
One hour 'mid scenes so blest
And I shall be at rest,
While Nature watch around me.

The Corse

All his life he spun them—
Foolish dreams, they said;
Little now it matters,
Since his dreams are dead.

Yesteryear a neighbour
Thus to him said he:
"Rest thou quiet, good brother,
What God wills shall be".—

"Long live thou to guide us!"
No more words he found;
Now the guide himself is
Resting underground.

Thrice the corse I covered,
Thrice its eyes did close,
Each time prayed for mercy—
God no mercy shows.

Once again I'll do so—
Makes the blood run cold;
Wounds so gaping, ghastly,
Who can safe behold?

Me the dead man looks at
With my father's eyes;
I'll go call the vicar,
Good is he and wise....

"Dominus vobiscum!
Come, and have no fear;
Be he man or demon,
We shall venture near....

What it means I know not,
Here I dare not stay;
Looks so like my brother
When a corse he lay.

I'll go tell the bishop,
There's no wiser man;
Let his Lordship fight him,
Let him if he can"....

"Benedicat vobis!
While ye tarry out,
I'll go see the body—
Foolish fears, no doubt....

Never, in dreams the strangest,
Thought the like to see;
Sure some power unearthly
Makes him look like me!

Three days lies unburied?
None will put his hand?
How he died ye know not?
Hard to understand.

But the Pope will aid us,
And a saint send down;
From His wrath deliver
This iniquous town"....

Gone are priest and prelate,
Gone too is everyone,
And my weary vigil
Never shall be done!

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